

PUBLIC COMMENT: JIM CASHA, 540-717-9240  
jim.casha@gmail.com

HOUSE EDUCATION COMMITTEE  
FEB. 12TH, 2015

### THIRD GRADE READING INITIATIVE

"THE BEST WAY TO REDUCE THE PRISON POPULATION IS  
PROPER PRENATAL CARE" DENNIS SCHRATZ, FORMER  
MI CORRECTIONS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR.

WHAT DOES THAT HAVE TO DO WITH EDUCATION?

WELL, MANY STATES ESTIMATE THE NUMBER OF PRISON  
BEDS THEY WILL NEED BY LOOKING AT 3RD GRADE READING  
SCORES.

SEVENTY PERCENT (70%) OF INMATES ARE AFFECTED  
BY PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE. SEVENTY PERCENT OF  
FOSTER KIDS ARE AFFECTED AS WELL. MANY OF THEM WILL  
END UP IN PRISON. WHY? IS IT BECAUSE THEY CAN'T  
READ? NO, IT'S BECAUSE THEIR BRAINS HAVE BEEN  
PERMANENTLY DAMAGED BY THE WORST FORM OF UNDERAGE  
DRINKING - PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE. IT'S WHY THEY CAN'T READ,  
IT'S THE REASON MANY OF THEM CAN'T DO MATH EITHER.  
THE GOVERNOR HAS MENTIONED 'PRENATAL' IN HIS EDUCATION  
PLAN MANY TIMES, ALTHOUGH HE REFUSED TO SAY THE WORD  
'PRENATAL' AT YESTERDAY'S BUDGET PRESENTATION. WHY DOES  
HE REFUSE TO SAY THE WORDS 'PRENATAL ALCOHOL EXPOSURE'?  
IF THE GOVERNOR WOULD JUST 'SAY IT', WE COULD ALL GET  
ON TASK OF ELIMINATING THE LEADING, BUT NOT THE ONLY, CAUSE  
OF COGNITIVE DISABILITIES IN MICHIGAN AND NORTH AMERICA.  
I RESPECTFULLY ASK THAT THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE MAKE  
THIS A PRIORITY IN THE NEW BUDGET.  
THANKS, PRESSING ON, WITH UNWAVERING FAITH,

 (OVER)

# MICHIGAN

## GROWING STRONGER

### Governor Snyder's FY 2016 Budget Recommendation

## THIRD-GRADE READING INITIATIVE

*"We need to put a stronger focus on what I describe as pre-natal through third-grade. One of the important metrics in someone's life on the River of Opportunity is the ability to be proficient reading by third-grade." -Governor Snyder*

### IN THE BUDGET

Proficiency in third-grade reading is an early indicator of having a skilled workforce that is imperative to growing Michigan stronger. This year's budget proposal recommends a total of \$48 million for implementing a statewide plan to improve third-grade reading. The governor is also calling for a workgroup to develop an action plan that will increase third grade reading scores.

### SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES

Piloting classes for parents that would provide information about their children's development, offer structured learning activities for parents and their children, and promote positive interaction between children and peers.

Expand home-visits from intermediate school districts to at-risk families in order to encourage early literacy activities and to identify children who might have disabilities or developmental delays.

Expand early childhood education for low-income families.

### SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS AND TEACHERS

Ensure that teachers have the training necessary to teach literacy by requiring new elementary teachers to pass a reading instruction capabilities assessment.

Provide research-based professional development for existing teachers.

Train teachers and administrators to be able to identify students in need of intervention.

Provide additional instruction time for students in need of more assistance.

Invest in literacy coaches for K-3 teachers to help teachers develop and implement new instruction strategies.

Encourage state departments to assign Pathways to Potential success coaches to academically at-risk elementary schools.

### ACCOUNTABILITY

A commission outside of state government will help oversee implementation of the plan to increase third grade reading scores.

Implement a kindergarten entry assessment to gauge the effectiveness of the state's childhood investments.

### BY THE NUMBERS:

*State spending= \$25 million*

*Federal spending= \$23.6 million*

***Grand total= \$48.6 million***